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BO 010

MEMORANDUM

August 21, 1980

TO : FILE

FROM : POL - Townsend B. Friedman

SUBJECT: [ ]

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

( ) Release (X) Excise ( ) Deny

Exemption(s): 81

Declassify: (X) In Part ( ) In Full

(X) Classify as C ( ) Extend as ( ) Downgrade to

Date 9/21/01 Declassify on Reason 25X1

[ ] He is well connected in the political world, very well informed and may have had connections with one or another of the military intelligence services. He also is well plugged in with the military, spent some time with Viola two days ago. In the past his information and analysis have usually proven to be accurate.

[ ] told me the following:

Presidential Selection

On the basis of his contacts with high-ranking officers as recently as yesterday, he expects the Navy to vote initially for Harguindeguy when the Junta meets to select the next president. The vote therefore will be two (Army and Air Force) for Viola and one for Harguindeguy. Since the election has to be by unanimous vote of the Junta, the Navy will then begin the bargaining with the other two for an increased role in the next administration seeking a larger number of governorships, mayoralities and ministries. Depending on how the bargaining goes, the Navy which in any case does not like Viola, may then throw out Galtieri's name as a possible compromise candidate. [ ] who has now become a great booster of Viola still thinks that Viola will emerge as president. However, he sees the coming weeks as being very uneasy ones for Argentina.

Peronist Politics

[ ] made the point that Isabelita has most of the big vote getters in the Peronist party behind her. Others, like himself, Anchorena and Bittel, have support too, but she has most of the popular Peronists. In addition, it is only Isabelita who has strong national appeal. She thus has great political leverage. [ ] also claimed that Omar Torrijos of Panama is bank-rolling Isabelita now. [ ] said that Torrijos' brother is presently in Argentina and has spent time with him and that the two would be

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calling on Isabel later. According to [ ] Torrijos has supplied Isabel with \$100,000 a few months ago and during this call on her Torrijos' brother would inform her of another \$100,000 delivery. (I asked [ ] why Torrijos would be bank-rolling Isabel. He said that Torrijos, with whom he claimed to have visited recently in Panama, is interested in projecting himself internationally and sees Isabel as a useful instrument in doing so.)

The Disappeared

[ ] and I discussed the phenomenon of the disappeared issue being taken up by politicians. He agreed that this is a significant break from the past. He explained, though, it was not as a seizure of humanitarianism or even as a signal that the disappeared are a popular vote getting issue. In fact, he denied both such hypotheses. Rather, he said, the politicians were now using this issue as a weapon to brandish at the military in negotiating over the future of Argentina. In future negotiations with the military government they plan to bargain the disappeared issue against a military withdrawal from power. He said that politicians are no longer fearful for their physical safety and feel that they can now begin to press this issue in their bargaining. (This scenario would I assume have the politicians passing some sort of amnesty for past military excesses in exchange for a military withdrawal from power.)

Argentina-US

[ ] told me that the misconception among the Argentine military about a possible Reagan administration is astounding. He claimed that Harguindeguy believes that should Reagan be elected that he would applaud Argentine government tactics in the "dirty war" and encourage such tactics in Argentina and elsewhere. [ ] said that Harguindeguy was a fool but his beliefs were widespread. He added that another man as foolish and as politically unsophisticated as Harguindeguy is General Crespi.

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